



Hamburg's new signing Argentina captain Juan Pablo Sorin, accompanied by a friend, arrives at Hamburg airport on Wednesday.

PHOTO: INTERNET

Kohler turns down Ivory Coast job

AFP, Berlin

West Germany's 1990 World Cup winner Juergen Kohler said Thursday he had turned down the chance to become the new manager of Cote D'Ivoire.

Boro sign Huth & Woodgate

AFP, Middlesbrough

Middlesbrough manager Gareth Southgate completed a double defensive swoop for Real Madrid's Jonathan Woodgate and Chelsea's Robert Huth on Wednesday.

Drogba against divisions

INTERNET, undated

Didier Drogba has urged Chelsea teammate William Gallas to 'clear the air' over whether he wants to quit the Premiership champions.

Germany confident despite crisis

Football

REUTERS, Berlin

Germany have a defensive crisis as they prepare to face Ireland in their first qualifying match in almost three years on Saturday.

Ireland were a shambles in a 4-0 friendly defeat by Netherlands in Dublin on the same night but coach Steve Staunton can welcome back several players who missed that game.

Gunners want Reyes exchange

THE GUARDIAN



Arsenal were last night on the brink of a swap deal that will see Jose Antonio Reyes move to Real Madrid in exchange for Julio Baptista, the Brazilian who

rejected a move to the club a year ago. Arsene Wenger looks set to finally land the 24-year-old, who can play in central midfield and in attack.



Danish international Thomas Gravesen (C) speaks to the press prior to a training session with the national team in Elsinore on Wednesday.

PHOTO: AFP

Portugal face FIFA sanctions

AFP, Lisbon

World football's ruling body FIFA could sanction the Portuguese football federation (FPF) for its part in the demotion of former top-flight side Gil Vicente, according to reports Thursday.

League officials upheld the complaint, and decided to relegate Gil Vicente for a perceived infraction, thus allowing Belenenses to conserve its top-flight status.

Rossi a Toon on loan

AFP, London

Manchester United forward Giuseppe Rossi has gone to Newcastle on loan until January but will not be allowed to play against the Old Trafford club.

The move leaves United with just Wayne Rooney, Louis Saha, Ole Gunnar Solskjaer and utility player Alan Smith as his options up front.

Thatcher handed six-match ban

AFP, Manchester

Manchester City on Wednesday handed Ben Thatcher a six-match suspension and fined him six-week's wages for the horrific challenge that left Portsmouth's Pedro Mendes in hospital.

The English Football Association (FA) had charged Thatcher over the clash and Manchester police were also investigating the incident.

Spain aim for flying start

Football

REUTERS, Madrid

Still smarting from the disappointment of yet another premature exit at a World Cup, Spain are looking for a convincing win against Liechtenstein in their opening Euro 2008 qualifier on Saturday.

Opener in Badajoz with a trip to Belfast to face Northern Ireland on Wednesday.

"We are happy and proud of what the basketball team are doing and of course we are envious too," the Real Madrid player said earlier this week.

'We have to be ruthless'

Football

AFP, Manchester

Steven Gerrard insists England must show no mercy against European whipping boys Andorra in Steve McClaren's first competitive match in charge of the national side.

The tiny nation in the Pyrenees have recorded just three victories in their short 10-year history and lost all 28 matches in the qualifiers for Euro 2000, World Cup 2002 and Euro 2004.

insists the team owe it to the fans to qualify for Euro 2008 without any scares.

Gerrard is demanding England learn from their failure at this summer's World Cup under Sven Goran Eriksson and



Atletico Madrid's new signing Portuguese midfielder Maniche raises his arms on his presentation to the press at the Vicente Calderon Stadium in Madrid on Wednesday.

PHOTO: AFP

CROSSWORD By Eugene Sheffer

ACROSS 35 Polar explorer 1 Dugout supply 5 Adage 8 Just okay 12 Met melody 13 Chart format 14 Weapon of mouse destruction 15 Levin's Connecticut town 17 Pound of verse 18 Curvaceous character 19 Powell co-star 20 Mar 21 Baltimore newspaper 22 Spacecraft compartment 23 Dish 26 Honeycomb cell, basically 30 Roll-call reply 31 Moving truck 32 'Unh-unh' 33 Shirley Temple trademarks

A crossword puzzle grid with numbers 1-35 indicating starting positions for the clues.

CRYPTOQUIP BDLWZ YQ PDOFXRIQ DB IF FXZ PZMDLLDLM GJ YIQ, D XISZ GJFZL SDBDFZR FITOTB IFFOIWFDGLB Yesterday's Cryptoquip: IF YOU LIKE CORRECTING FALSE RUMORS AND MYTHS, DOES THAT MAKE YOU A FICTION RIGHTER? Today's Cryptoquip Clue: Y equals M